

Fish Art and Writing Contest

New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife

Announces

Fish Art and Writing Contest 2003

The contest is open to all students in grades 4 through 8. This is an art and writing contest based on the Aquatic WILD activity "Fishy Who's Who". (A full description of this activity that can be used by teachers in grades 5 through 8 can be found on the Division of Fish and Wildlife's website: www.njfishandwildlife.com. (This activity can help teachers meet NJ Science Standards 5.12.4 and 5.7.4.1.)

The drawing of the New Jersey fish can be done in acrylics, watercolors, oil, oil pastels, crayons or ink. Art must be original. The fish should be depicted in its habitat. The finished size should be approximately 8 x 10 inches. Entries will be judged initially on the art submitted.

Entries must also include a written biography of the same New Jersey fish depicted in the drawing. The biography must include: where in New Jersey the fish is found, its habits, habitat, any ecological information about the fish, and whether or not it is of commercial or recreational importance. Biographies should be one page or 500 words, preferably typed.

There will be first and second place winners in each of the following categories: 4th grade, 5th grade, 6th grade, 7th grade, and 8th grade. Biographies are limited to 500 words and will be judged along with the drawing of the fish. Each winner will receive an engraved plaque and fishing equipment. In addition, each winner will be invited to the Pequest Trout Hatchery and Natural Resource Education Center in Oxford for a special VIP tour and awards ceremony. Winners will be able to fish at the Pequest Fishing Education Pond on the opening day of trout season—Saturday, April 12, 2003.

Entries must be postmarked by Friday, March 7, 2003. Entries must include the entrant's name, home address, home telephone number, grade and school name. Entries become the property of the Division of Fish and Wildlife and will not be returned.

Submit to Fish Art and Biography Contest, NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife, 605 Pequest Rd., Oxford, NJ 07863.

Note that this contest is not affiliated with Wildlife Forever's State Fish Art Contest. For information on their contest, see www.wildlife-forever.org.

One of Ten Contest Winners for 2002.

Matthew Roach
Homeschooled
Grade 5

The Muskellunge



Have you ever dreamed of catching a monster size fish? Well I have, and the musky is that type of fish, I have caught this amazing fish and have been fascinated by its size, camouflaged color and skill. It has earned the title of "the fish that requires 1,000 casts." This unpredictable fish is a prized sporting fish to catch.

The word musky is short for muskellunge. The name muskellunge may have come from the Ojibway Indian word "maskinonge". The word "mas" means ugly and the word "kinonge" means fish. Maskinonge then means "ugly fish". Another possible meaning may have come from the French settlers who called it maggue allongee, which mean "long face". Wherever it may have come from, the musky is an ugly fish with a long face.

The musky ranges in the northeastern part of the United States. It ranges north into Canada, east into New Jersey, south into Tennessee and west into Minnesota. Musky spend most of their time in deep water but often come to shallow water to feed. They like water that is about 67° F. Muskies need large bodies of water such as lake and large rivers to survive. This is because they require a large supply of food. Some places in New Jersey where one can fish for musky are the Delaware River, Mountain Lake and the Echo Reservoir. I enjoy fishing for musky at Mountain Lake, and although they are hard to catch, I caught a small one of 26 inches long.

These fish like to hide in weeds, so when a fish swims by, it can attack it. They like to prey on fish of all sizes. If a musky attacks a fish that is too big for it to swallow, then the musky can drown. This is because the prey fish's size will block the flow of water through the musky's gills and cut off the air circulation.

In many lakes, the musky is the top of the fish food chain. If one were to take out all the musky, the prey fish could overpopulate a lake, therefore with the musky, it helps balance the fish food chain. Musky often fight each other to defend their territories. Each season their boundaries change depending on the amount of food they need. In the spring, the musky's territory may be several miles. In the summer, the territory may shrink to about 500 yards. It is common to catch muskies with deep scars on their head and tail. This shows the seriousness of their fights to defend their territory. Although the musky is a predator fish, their young are at risk to the northern pike. This is because the northern pike hatch earlier than those of the musky. So when the pike hatchlings are three to four inches long, the musky eggs are just hatching and the baby pike eat most of the baby muskies. Only the skilled muskies can survive. Baby musky that are 8 to 12 inches long are in danger to the osprey, blue heron and adult musky. So the musky that survive to adulthood are the strongest and most skilled at survival.

The musky is basically caught for the sport of fishing. They are not good to eat because of their taste and numerous bones. When a fisherman catches a large 40–50 inch musky the fish is highly prized and usually mounted. I hope this information encourages people to pursue the fish of their dreams—THE MUSKY!

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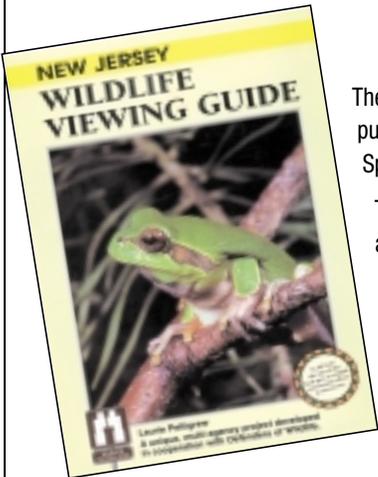
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The NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife is proud to announce the publication of the New Jersey Wildlife Viewing Guide. The publication of the Guide is the culmination of a two-year project coordinated by the Division's Endangered and Nongame Species Program to establish a network of viewing sites throughout the state.

The Guide beautifully illustrates the rich natural treasures that few people realize exist in the state. Experience the amazing diversity of New Jersey's wildlife and habitats at 87 of the state's best Wildlife Viewing Areas. The 165 page Guide is full of color photos and illustrations and provides directions to each site and information on site facilities, best viewing seasons and which animals and habitats can be seen.

Unique to the New Jersey Guide is the addition of Wildlife Diversity Tours. In four regions, expanded information is provided on five sites in each region that when experienced through a 2-3 day trip provide a deeper understanding and appreciation of the ecosystems and wildlife found in the region.

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The creation of the Wildlife Viewing Guide and the development of a Watchable Wildlife Program for New Jersey was made possible in part through grants from the EPA, US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service and Department of Defense. Major funding has been provided through proceeds from the sale of "Conserve Wildlife" license plates.

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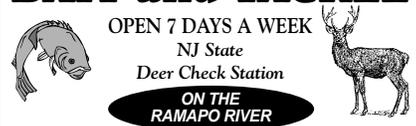
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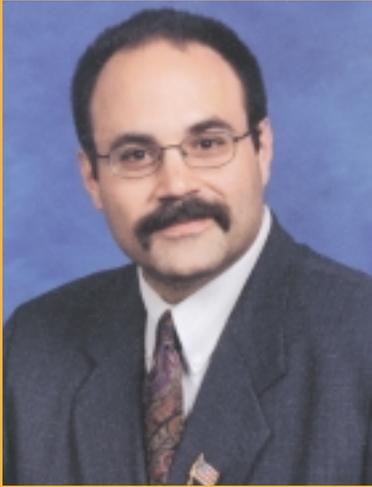
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